

The following guidelines presuppose that every extraordinary minister of the Eucharist has read “Guidelines for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, Diocese of Lansing (1992). Also available on line at the Lansing Diocese website are “Particular Norms for the Celebration and Distribution of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds for the Diocese of Lansing (2003) and “Bread of Life and Cup of Salvation: Guidelines for Holy Communion for Those who suffer from Celiac Disease or Alcohol Intolerance and for those who minister to them. (2005). Other resources are also available. If you find something that has been helpful to you, please share the source of information with me.

Continued prayer and discernment is also a very important aspect of our ministry. You are encouraged to reflect on the Scriptures and spend time in private prayer, Eucharistic Adoration on Thursday, and take the opportunity to make use of the sacrament of Reconciliation.

The Diocese of Lansing grants permission to us as lay people to distribute the Holy Eucharist for a period of two years and this period is renewable with the expectation that continuing formation and discernment is sought.

Thank you for sharing your gifts.

### **Prayer of Preparation**

*Bread of life, Jesus Christ,  
You shed your blood to save us.  
May your Spirit fill my heart  
That I may love as you do love  
All those I serve at Mass today.  
Amen <sup>1</sup>*

### **Duties of Eucharistic Ministers**

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<sup>1</sup> From “Guide for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion” The Liturgical Ministry Series – Kenneth A. Riley and Paul Turner. A copy is available in our library at the Family Center.

1. Arrive 20 minutes before Mass
2. Report to the Sacristy to sign in at the position you would like to serve at, and let the captain know you are here. Check with the captain before helping to carry out the sacred vessels, altar breads, and wine.
3. Immediately after the Sign of Peace approach the altar reverently, use the hand sanitizer to clean your hands (if you are Cup minister, be sure to pick up a linen purificator after you have sanitized your hands), and stand in line on the correct side of the altar. (Cup ministers beside the altar servers on the choir side – Host ministers to the west of the altar, behind the bearing cross.) Please note that during Christmas, Easter, Bereavement Mass, and other such occasions when there are more than the normal number of extraordinary ministers and/or there are special decorations surrounding the altar, you will line up on the floor in front of the steps of the sanctuary...cup ministers line up in front of the altar, host ministers line up on the chapel side. **A CHANGE FOR 10:00 MASS – Because of the number of ministers for 10:00 mass, this procedure will now be followed every Sunday at 10:00.** Once choir is done for the summer, the lay ministers will go back to lining up in the sanctuary. For the other occasions mentioned, the captain will inform you when this procedure will be followed.) Remember, “when receiving Holy Communion, the communicant bows his or her head before the Sacrament as a gesture of reverence and receives the Body of the Lord from the minister-*GIRM #160*.” We cannot expect the congregation to do so if we are not setting the correct example. After receiving Communion, approach the priest, deacon who will hand you your vessel. Go to your assigned place **AS SOON AS** you receive your vessel. **NOTE:** When there is no deacon or extra priest to help at a week-end mass, the celebrant will need help in distributing the sacred vessels. The captain will be responsible for taking the ciboria or cups off the altar. Just because you see a lay person approaching the altar and taking the vessels off the altar, please **do not** take it upon yourself to approach the altar and take a vessel. The celebrant, assisting priest, or deacons are generally the only ones who hand us the appropriate vessel.
4. **Communion should be given with reverence and welcoming. Be truly present to each person and look at them when you say “The Body of Christ” or “The Blood of Christ”. Please use**

**these words – no additions or substitutions. Do not rush. We are here to serve.**

5. If you are distributing the Body of Christ, hold the host just below the eye level of the communicant and allow him/her to finish bowing or genuflecting, look the communicant in the eye and say “The Body of Christ”. Eye contact is important. Do not rush. We are here to serve. Allow each communicant a moment to respond “Amen”. Be sure to adjust the height that you are holding the ciborium to accommodate the communicant. If needed, practice this outside of Mass “so that you can feel at ease and be filled with reverential awe as you exercise your ministry during the sacred liturgy.”
6. If the host is dropped, do not serve it to the person in front of whom it was dropped. Your calm demeanor at this moment can calm and assure an anxious and embarrassed person. Pick up the host and consume it yourself, or put it in the palm of your hand that is holding the ciborium. Do not mingle it with the hosts that go back in the tabernacle. Place it in an empty ciborium that is going back to the sacristy, consume it there or if it has been too soiled, dissolve it in water and dispose of it in the Sacramentarium.
7. If distributing the Precious Blood, again, let the communicant finish reverencing the cup, look at the communicant and say “The Blood of Christ”. Allow each communicant a moment to say “Amen”. Hand the chalice to the communicant. Eye contact is important. The emphasis is on *receiving* the Sacrament. Do not rush. Be especially sensitive to the elderly and small children who may need help steadying the cup. Remember, we are here to serve. When the cup is returned to you, wipe the rim both inside and out with the purificator and rotate ¼ turn. It is very important to open the purificator from its folds so that is available to use like a small dishtowel. Use a different section of the unfolded purificator for each wipe, turning it over as necessary. You may have to look up and hold the chalice higher for someone who is taller than you are. In the same respect, you may have to bend a little if someone is shorter.
8. If you drop or spill the Precious Blood – do not panic. Stop what you are doing. Your demeanor will reassure those communicants in line or, in particular, the person who may have caused the spill. If the spill is small, your purificator may be all you need to blot the

spill. Direct communicants to the other E.M.s and get another purificator. There should always be a supply of additional, fresh purificators on the credence table as well as white hand towels. If the spill is large, put your purificator over the spill and begin distributing at a spot removed from the spillage so that no one would step on it. After the Liturgy, get a cold wet cloth and carefully scrub the place where the spill occurred. The cloths used to soak up the original spill should be placed with the purificators to be rinsed out in the appropriate manner.

9. If an adult or child approaches with arms crossed over chest you may give a simple blessing such as “May the peace and love of Christ be with you” or, for small children “Jesus loves you”. It is not permissible to make the sign of the cross while giving a blessing or bless them with a host. Keep it simple and sincere.
10. E.M.s serving shut-ins may approach you with a pyx. (A round, gold-plated metal container with a hinged lid.) They will ask you for the number of hosts required to complete their visits. Place the requested number of hosts in the pyx, saying “The Body of Christ” and the response of “Amen” for each host, allow the communicant to close the lid and offer them the Precious Body. If anyone without a pyx asks for additional hosts, politely refuse and tell them you will help them after Mass. There are some pyxs in the drawer in the sacristy. Do not use the ones in the vesting room that are for the gluten free hosts.
11. If the E.M. serving the Body should leave his/her spot to administer to an elderly/handicapped person, the E.M. serving the Precious Blood should follow and offer the Cup to that person.
12. After communion, return to the ramp area and stay in front of the short wall. This will allow more room behind the credence table for the priest or deacon to consolidate the hosts. If there is no assisting priest or deacon, it is the captain’s responsibility to consolidate the hosts. Help with carrying the various sacred vessels and lavabo back to the sacristy. Please be aware if the Precious Body is being put back in the tabernacle and pause a moment before you leave the sanctuary. Reverence is the key to all of our actions.
13. While cleaning the sacred vessels in the Sacristy, observe a reverent silence, and should you opt to receive, consume the Precious Blood here, not at the altar.

14. The captain is in charge of purifying and cleaning the cups and chalice. They may delegate that responsibility to you. **Be aware of any jewelry that you are wearing, especially rings. Once scratched, the vessels can only be re-plated!** After carefully purifying the cups and drying them with a purificator be sure to use the small, plastic bowls (they are kept in the same cupboard as the clean purificators and wooden trays) to wash and clean the cups. The cups are never fully submerged in water. This is the reasoning behind using the small, plastic bowls. There is also a bottle of Ivory soap that should be used. Use a clean, worn, purificator from the pile that is next to plastic bowls to dry the cups and chalice. Since we have taken the time to reverently and carefully purify the inside surfaces of all the sacred vessels with water and consumed that water that was used to purify the sacred vessels, there is not a chance that any particles of the Sacred Body and Blood of Christ are in the wash and rinse water. Therefore the contents of the two plastic bowls can be poured down the regular sink. The sacrarium (the metal sink in the corner covered with a hinged lid) does not need to be used for disposing of this leftover wash and rinse water. Please return the bowls, soap and trays to this same cupboard that the supply of clean, unused purificators are in when done. The cups should be returned to their locked cupboard after they have been examined for spots and polished, ready for the next mass.
15. The bowl that is used to carry the altar breads up to the altar at the Offertory should be carefully cleaned, polished and slipped into the quilted cover that is provided for it and placed in the locked, angled cupboard that is on the southeast corner of the sacristy. Be aware that there are two sizes. The smaller one should be in its quilted cover and nested in the larger one that is also in its quilted cover!
16. Any empty ciboria should also be purified, wiped clean, polished and put away in the locked cupboard along with the cups and chalice. The ciboria are never fully submerged in water either.
17. Return used purificators to the laundry basket inside the tall cupboard next to the sacrarium. For sanitary reasons as well as sacred protocol, please remember that all the purificators used during Mass by the celebrant or by us should not be re-used for any reason other than purification. After Mass, if they are damp,

they should be unfolded and hung inside the closet. Otherwise, they can be laid in the hamper that is inside the closet. The “laundry lady” has to purify these clothes first before washing and if we have “dunked” them or gotten them really wet, we could end up putting the Precious Blood or particles of the Sacred Body down the common sewer.

### Celiac Disease.

Celiac disease is a disorder causing an allergic intestinal reaction to the gluten in wheat. We have several parishioners who suffer from this disease and they cannot consume the regular host.

In the vesting room refrigerator, up in the freezer section, are gluten free altar breads. There are several pyxs with black cords attached also in the refrigerator. The black cords are to distinguish these pyxs from the ones used for the homebound.

Most people who require the gluten free altar breads, know where they are kept and will get an altar bread and pyx themselves before mass and put it on the altar.

If someone requests gluten free altar bread, be sure to wash your hands before handling them. Put one altar bread in the black corded pyx and either place the pyx on the pall that covers the chalice (Father Andrew’s preference) or place it directly on the corner of the altar. It will be consecrated at Mass by the celebrant.

Normally, the communicant will approach the celebrant to receive the gluten free host. As a minister of the host, if you are asked for it, go to the altar, pick it up by the cord and hand it to person. **DO NOT TOUCH THE PYX WITH YOUR HANDS.** You have been handling the wheat hosts and it could cause the person to have a reaction. The person will open the pyx and take the host themselves.

They may give you back the pyx or they may return it to the vesting room themselves after mass. If they hand it back to you, again, be sure to handle it by the cord, place it on the credence table and after Mass, return it to the vesting room refrigerator. **Please do not handle the pyx itself unless you have thoroughly washed your hands. It is not necessary to open the pyx and purify or clean it in any way.**

## GENERAL REMINDERS:

- ❖ Once the schedule is printed, it becomes your responsibility to ensure that if you cannot make your assigned Masses, you will need to find a substitute. Use the EM roster for this purpose.
- ❖ If you attend a Mass for which you are not on the schedule, please feel free to check in with the captain to see if they need help.
- ❖ Remember, we must always defer to the ordinary ministers of the Eucharist. If there are too many servers, an extraordinary minister should be the one to go back to the pew.
- ❖ Please dress respectfully and modestly. Do not call attention to yourself by inappropriate dress.
- ❖ Do not address communicants whom you know by their name. The reason for this is that by doing so, you may unintentionally make a person whose name you did not say feel less welcome.

Please note that these guidelines are subject to additions and revisions. Many resources were used in typing these up. I apologize for not giving proper credit where credit is probably due!!

Thank you again for taking the time to serve your fellow parishioners. If you have any questions or comments, please call us. God bless you.

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REVISED 04/02/2011

Some questions and comments came up. To re-enforce what should be done, please note the following:

Item #3 - The deacon or captain is going to start placing the cups on the altar at the offertory and the captain may, on some occasions, help to pass out the sacred vessels. We wanted you to be aware of this change.

Also, some people seem to hang back when the assisting priest, deacon or captain is handing out the sacred vessels. When you are standing in the sanctuary, it is okay to approach whoever is handing out the vessels in an orderly and reverent manner. Just don't "swarm" the area around the altar. Be sure to go to your assigned spot as soon as you have received your vessel. If you are a cup minister, be sure to unfold your purificator and use it to clean both the inside and outside of the rim. If you need to, practice this movement back in the sacristy with bottled water in the cup.

Item #10 – A pyx is the only acceptable container for taking additional hosts to shut-ins. If someone approaches you with a Kleenex, or anything else, you may quietly ask them to see you after Mass and then help them get a pyx and unlock the tabernacle for them and you get a host for them.

Item #12 – Please stand in front of or to the side of the short wall. This means that you would be standing on the ramp. The area between the credence table and tabernacle is not very big and the assisting priest, deacon, or captain needs room to work in!

Item #14 – If it is necessary, after purifying the celebrant's chalice, it should be wiped dry with the tri-folded purificator and then carefully washed like the cups were. This should be done after the daily mass or a funeral mass for sure.

After purifying the carafe that contained Precious Blood, please dry it with a purificator before washing it in soap and water.